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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0843
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
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RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS
RUEHJL/AMEMBASSY BANJUL 0005
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
RUEHTO/AMEMBASSY MAPUTO 0014
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 000409

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/24/2018
TAGS: [ENRG](#) [EPET](#) [PREL](#) [GA](#) [MZ](#) [SU](#) [VE](#)
SUBJECT: VENEZUELA TO OPEN EMBASSIES IN AFRICA'S EMERGING
PETRO-PRODUCERS

REF: 2007 BANJUL 0332

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Daniel Lawton
for Reason 1.4(d).

¶1. (C) Summary. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (BRV) announced the assignment of personnel to open new embassies in Gambia, Sudan and Mozambique. These three embassies will bring the total to 17 of 18 planned Venezuelan missions in Africa. The three newest missions all correspond to nations on the cusp of becoming significant oil and gas producers. Chavez will likely try to persuade these emerging petro-nations to support his call to use petroleum as a tool to promote socialism. End Summary.

EMBASSIES STAFFED

¶2. (U) The Foreign Ministry in a March 13 ceremony announced the assignment of personnel to new Venezuelan embassies in Gambia, Sudan and Mozambique. Vice Foreign Minister for Africa Reinaldo Bolivar said that opening these new embassies is in keeping with Venezuela's 2005 pledge to open 18 missions in Africa. Minister Counselor Lourdes Perez, previously assigned to Kenya, will open the mission in the Republic of Gambia as the Commercial Counselor. Carlos Garcia from the FM's Africa Bureau will join her. President Chavez visited Gambia in July 2006. (REFTEL) The two countries signed 12 bilateral accords in May 2007. Counselor Javier Merayo and Antonio Torrealba will open the mission in Khartoum, while Business AttachQ Nestor Fajardo and Richard Rivero will start the mission in Mozambique. Sudan and Gambia are expected to open missions in Caracas in the near future and according to the BRV news service, Bala Garba Juhumpa has been named Gambia's ambassador to Venezuela.

PETRO-PALS

¶3. (U) Alexander's Gas and Oil Connection estimates that Gambia sits astride a potential oil reserve of 100 million barrels in the Gulf of Guinea. Oil and Gas Journal calculated Sudan's proven reserves at 5 billion barrels and Mozambique has proven natural gas deposits of 3.5 trillion cubic feet according to Reuters. The agreements between Gambia and Venezuela included cooperation on exploration and development. Vice Minister Bolivar said Venezuela had "great

empathy for Sudan" because they had both "been attacked by the United States for their oil wealth."

¶4. (C) COMMENT: Chavez uses Venezuela's petro-dollars to buy influence around the globe. Although his attempts during the November 2007 summit to use OPEC "as an active geopolitical agent" were rebuffed, we expect Chavez to court these three emerging African producers to use their energy resources in support of "international socialism." END COMMENT.

Minimize Considered.

FRENCH